



State Capitol | Lansing, Michigan 48913

PH (517) 373.7670 | FAX (517) 373.5958

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Contact: Tiffany Kimble

(586) 493-5792

Senator Sanborn Announces Support for Merit Preservation Plan

Roundtable Events to be Conducted across the State, Web site Launched

(LANSING) – State Senator Alan Sanborn, R-Richmond, today announced his support for legislative efforts to preserve vital funding for the Michigan Merit Award Scholarship. The scholarship rewards academic achievement by Michigan high school students and makes post-secondary education more affordable for Michigan's hard working families.

"It is essential that we dissuade the Governor from her intent to dramatically reduce funding for the Michigan Merit Scholarship and continue funding it at its current level of \$2,500," Sanborn said. "Providing this financial boost to the families of those students who demonstrate the desire and ability to succeed academically is vitally important for the future of Michigan's children, workforce and economy."

Senate Republicans have begun a series of roundtable discussions with impacted families and students, local school board officials, educators and higher education representatives. The first meeting was held Monday, May 12 on the Royal Oak campus of Oakland Community College, with future meetings to take place in Grand Rapids and Midland.

Senator Sanborn also announced the launch of the Senate Republicans' Merit Awards Preservation Plan Web site. The page includes links for statistics, testimonials from students and families, and a link for residents to voice their opinions. The page can be located at <http://www.senate.state.mi.us/gop/merit>.

The Merit scholarship not only helps middle-class working families afford a college education for their children, it is also the only state scholarship based solely on academic achievement. In the past two years alone, over 140,000 Michigan families have benefited from the scholarship. This included 3400 students in Macomb County that were awarded the scholarship last year.

The scholarship also keeps the promise Senator Sanborn and his fellow Republican lawmakers have made to working families and college-bound students: work hard, stay in school, get good grades and good test scores and we will reward you by contributing to the cost of a college or vocational education.

In addition to contributing to tuition costs, the scholarship also provides support for textbooks and miscellaneous educational expenses, transportation, rental or purchase of a personal computer,

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reasonable room and board, dependent day care, disability-related expenses – including special services, personal assistance, materials, equipment and supplies.

“Michigan voters overwhelmingly voiced their support for Merit Scholarships when Proposal 4 passed last November,” Sanborn said. “I think those voices should continue to be heard.”

The Merit Preservation Plan, as supported by Senator Sanborn, is an effort to recognize and reward the state’s hardworking young people – the future job providers, educators and healthcare providers. Attracting and keeping those young people in Michigan will only produce greater benefits for generations to come.

As Michigan’s graduating high school seniors commence to the next stage of their educational career, many will benefit from the scholarship. Senator Sanborn has announced his steadfast support for the Merit Preservation Plan, and is willing to fight for every student who has worked for the award.